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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/ANP/RAMSEY AND EB/BOBO  
USDA FOR FAS/ITP/TALLEY, BREHM, MEYER AND CLAUS,  
FAS/FAA/CONLON, AMS/SPOMER AND SAUSVILLE,  
FAS/ICD/WITHERS, AND FSIS/CODEX/SCARBROUGH  
COMMERCE FOR ITA/HILL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [TBIO](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND POSITION AT CODEX COMMISSION MEETING  
JULY 4-9 IN ROME, ITALY

REF: SECSTATE 113408 AND SECSTATE 113635

SUMMARY

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1. New Zealand will participate in the 28TH session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) in Rome, July 4-9. The New Zealand delegation will be headed by Andrew McKenzie, Executive Director of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA). The delegation will also include Steve Hathaway, Director of Program Development, NZFSA; Raj Rajasekar, Codex Program Manager, NZFSA; and Melissa Quarrie, Policy Analyst, Codex, NZFSA. Talking points provided reftel and detailed briefing papers regarding key issues of importance to the United States were shared with NZFSA. Our discussions with NZFSA's Codex Program Manager lead us to believe that New Zealand will be generally supportive of U.S. positions taken on key issues at the meeting. New Zealand officials will participate in a telephone conference call with U.S. officials on Thursday June 23 (Wellington time) to discuss New Zealand views/positions related to Codex agenda issues. New Zealand looks forward to obtaining additional details regarding a possible U.S. candidate for Vice Chair of Codex. New Zealand delegation members will participate in the Codex workshop offered by the U.S. on Saturday, July 2, and the reception hosted by the Agricultural Affairs Office of the U.S. Mission to FAO. End Summary.

2. New Zealand agrees with and will support the U.S. in requesting the CAC to approve new work to elaborate a Codex Standard for parmesan cheese and to direct the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP) to develop the standard. New Zealand agrees that the international trade in parmesan cheese exceeds all of the criteria agreed upon by the CCMMP for the elaboration of individual cheese standards. New Zealand also supports the position that the issue of GI protection or Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) with respect to a standard for parmesan cheese should not be addressed in Codex. New Zealand considers that the PDO issue is more appropriate for the World Intellectual Property Organization and the WTO agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS).

3. New Zealand has not opposed advancement to Step 5 of the Proposed Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labeling of Prepackaged Food: Quantitative Ingredient Declaration. That said, it is generally not supportive of extensive QUID labeling. New Zealand recognizes the validity of the procedural issues raised by the United States, i.e. four significant provisions remain in square brackets and are unresolved. This raises the question for New Zealand as to whether it is appropriate to advance on this issue at this time. New Zealand officials are expected to consult further before deciding the level of support to offer the United States on this issue at the Rome Codex Commission meeting.

4. New Zealand will join the United States in opposing new work being undertaken on animal feeding at this time. New Zealand fully agrees that countries are still assessing their present systems and responses to the recently adopted Codex Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding. New Zealand also agrees with the U.S. position that it would not be time or money well spent to use a Task Force to develop a HACCP-related document for use in the processing of food and feed ingredients. New Zealand will also support the U.S. view that the revision to the Codex Principles and Guidelines for the exchange of information in Food Safety Emergency Situations extends the scope of the document to cover feeding stuffs for food producing animals and that this revision adequately addresses concerns relating to a rapid alert system for feed.

5. New Zealand agrees with and will support views expressed reftel regarding the review and its findings

regarding committee structures and mandates. New Zealand does not support the consultants' recommendation that a Commodity Standards Management Committee should be created. New Zealand shares the U.S. concern that that it would represent another layer of bureaucracy demanding additional resource requirements and may not improve Codex efficiency. New Zealand does not have a well-defined viewpoint regarding recommendation No. 20 but appreciates points raised by the United States.

16. New Zealand is fully supportive of position that Codex has a mandate to address antimicrobial resistance and supports further work on this subject by existing Codex committee structure. New Zealand does not believe that a justification exists and, therefore, will not support the formation of a Codex/OIE ad-hoc task force at this time to accomplish work on antimicrobial resistance.

17. New Zealand supports the work being carried out by the Trust Fund for enhanced participation in Codex. It also shares all of the concerns detailed in reftel.

18. New Zealand will support the United States is seeking adoption of cadmium in wheat grain, potato, stem and root vegetables and other vegetables at step 8. It will also support the U.S. in seeking adoption of the draft maximum levels for cadmium of 0.4 mg/kg in polished rice and marine bivalve mollusks and in cephalopods (without viscera) at step 5, provided that oysters and scallops are excluded.

19. New Zealand looks forward to obtaining additional information regarding a potential U.S. candidate for Vice Chair of Codex and participating in the U.S. organized workshop and reception on July 2.

HADDA